

Recommendation for SCMS Teaching Award

Kate Kane

RE: Charles Nelson Kleinhans

It is a great pleasure to recommend Chuck Kleinhans for the SCMS Teaching Award. I took several courses with Chuck in graduate school, served as his teaching assistant and his research assistant, and we organized a conference together. Chuck has been an excellent role model in so many ways that it is difficult to describe them briefly. I have always admired and appreciated the way Chuck's approach to scholarship is grounded in both common-sense reality and broad-ranging intellectual discipline. My favorite thing about Chuck as a teacher is the way he would combine materials in a course so that we would cover the foundations and then he would throw in a curve, something unexpected so that you had to stretch your brain to make the connection. I learned from Chuck to be courageous in class, to be willing to try something unorthodox, and at the same time to consider how to make the classroom a safe place to study difficult and uncomfortable topics. Chuck shines in teaching the foundational subjects, and he is a real star when it comes to feminist, queer, and class questions. He is self-critically conscious of his position as a white male scholar, and cognizant of the privilege that brings him, and he has the knack of making people feel safe to explore where scholarly desire might lead. As a mentor, Chuck is a sympathetic and no-nonsense sounding board, and I know I am not the only one who relies on his insight and support when academic politics are baffling, or students are maddening. Chuck has inspired and incited untold amounts of scholarship, media productions, teaching, conversations, and potlucks. You could not find a more deserving recipient or one who has made greater contributions to film and media scholarship.